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INFO RUEHXK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 000021

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE AND NEA/IPA, PRM FOR PRM/ANE; NSC FOR
PASCUAL/PRATT; PLEASE PASS TO USAID FOR
KUNDER/MCLOUD/BORODIN/NANDY/LAUDATO

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: GAZA HUMANITARIAN UPDATE - JANUARY 4

¶1. (SBU) Summary. No crossings were open in Gaza on January 4. On January 3, five truckloads of medical supplies entered through Rafah crossing, and seven medical cases exited there. OCHA contacts estimate that less than 10 percent of Gazans have electricity or running water, and the WFP reports that "there is a food crisis in Gaza." End Summary.

Crossings Update

¶2. (SBU) No crossings were open for the movement of supplies or persons in Gaza on January 4, according to UNRWA, OCHA, and ICRC contacts. OCHA reports that five truckloads of medical supplies (from Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Libya, and Russia) entered through Rafah crossing, and seven medical evacuees exited there on January ¶3.

Fuel

¶3. (SBU) UNRWA and OCHA contacts confirm that 35,000 liters of UNRWA's diesel supply was transported to the Coastal Municipal Water Authority (CMWA-Gaza's water and utility company) for its water and sewage pumps on January 3, but CMWA reports that it has not distributed the fuel to its several dried-out pumps due to airstrikes. UNRWA planned to transfer the remaining 40,000 liters on January 4, but the move was cancelled. UNRWA contacts report that the Israeli commercial fuel distributive company has refused to transfer diesel on a back-to-back system at Kerem Shalom for liability reasons, and UNRWA reports that cooking gas cannot transfer back-to-back because it is highly flammable.

Power and Water

¶4. (SBU) OCHA contacts estimate that less than 10 percent of Gazans have electricity or running water. At least six of Gaza's 13 cross-border power lines have been damaged the past two days, reducing overall electricity flow to about 52MW (roughly a quarter of recent supply), according to OCHA contacts. OCHA also reports that GEDCO (Gaza's main power distributor) is concerned these damages may not be repairable unless Israel allows electrical spare parts into Gaza.

WFP reports "Food Crisis"

¶5. (SBU) UNRWA had two distribution sites open on January 4 that serviced approximately 2,000 people. WFP did not distribute food on January 4. WFP and UNRWA were able to distribute only limited amounts of food on January 3. WFP contacts assess that Gaza's current food crisis stems from shortages in the market, almost complete closure of food stores, cooking fuel shortages, and the inability of aid agencies to distribute food regularly.

Displacement Update

¶6. (SBU) UNRWA reports that it opened two additional emergency shelters on January 4, raising the total to five shelters that house approximately 1,350 Gazans. People are now remaining in the shelters throughout the day and night. UNRWA is trying to coordinate food distributions and the provision of blankets and mattresses in the shelters, but UNRWA contacts say that movement of staff is extremely difficult.